

*****December 14, 2020*****

The Signal Mountain Town Council held a regular meeting electronically on Monday, December 14, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. Those present were:

Those present were: Mayor Charles Poss
Vice Mayor Susannah Murdock
Councilmember Vicki Anderson
Councilmember Andrew Gardner
Councilmember Dan Landrum

Also present were: Town Manager Boyd Veal
Town Attorney Harry Cash
Finance Director/Town Recorder Carol White

Councilmember Andrew Gardner led the pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was observed.

Mayor Poss made the statement that it is in the best interests of the Town to hold this meeting electronically as authorized by Executive Order 71 from the Governor. All Councilmembers agreed that electronic meetings protect the health, safety and welfare of the participants.

Vice Mayor Murdock made a motion to continue the meetings electronically during the month of December provided such is allowed. The motion was approved by roll call vote, with all Councilmembers present voting in favor of approving the motion.

Mayor Poss said that the information on how to access the electronic meetings is not on the Town's website. Town Manager, Boyd Veal, said that information is available on the front page of the site. He said the information was expanded today to include additional instructions. Councilmember Gardner asked that a link be added for the YouTube site. Mayor Poss suggested this link be added in the agenda when it's listed on the website.

Minutes

The minutes for the November 9, 2020 regular meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

The minutes for the November 23, 2020 regular meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

Citizen Comments

Mayor Poss asked if there were any requests to address the Council.

There being no requests, the meeting resumed.

Audit Presentation

Brian Wright, CPA with Johnson, Murphey & Wright, P.C. presented the Council with the Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2020.

Mr. Wright gave a brief explanation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances on pages 22, 38, and 74. He explained that, compared to the prior year, the General Fund had an increase in revenues of \$711,000.00 and an increase in expenses of \$400,000.00.

Mr. Wright called the Council's attention to pages 4-15 which provide the Management Discussion and Analysis, which he said presents the highlights of the town's finances.

Mr. Wright stated the auditors were able to give an unmodified opinion on the Town's financial presentation. He explained this was the best type of opinion to receive. He said there were, once again, no findings of material noncompliance found. This is the fourth year in a row the Town has had a "Clean" audit. Mr. Wright was very complementary of the Town's administrative and financial management.

WWTA Update

Hamilton County Water and Wastewater Treatment Authority (WWTA) Executive Director, Mike Patrick, and Engineer Scott McDonald, provided the background of the WWTA. They said that the system on Signal Mountain is one of the worst in the WWTA system. They explained that the utility's current challenges include an EPA moratorium in place since 2008, antiquated pipes, reliance on another community's sewer plant, and numerous environmental issues (most notably above ground piping in waterways). They explained that one of the system's largest difficulties is stormwater runoff which overwhelms the system. (See attached presentation)

Council discussed the possibility of the WWTA obtaining grants. Mr. Patrick replied that while this is difficult, they might be able to obtain low interest loans. However, he explained that costs to repair or replace the system, county wide, could easily be into the hundreds of millions. Mr. Patrick said that the WWTA is investigating possible solutions to the system concerns.

Resolutions

1. "A RESOLUTION BY THE SIGNAL MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL ADOPTING BANK FORM RESOLUTIONS FOR SIGNATURES ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN."

Vice Mayor Murdock made a motion to approve the Resolution. Councilmember Anderson Landrum seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote, with all Councilmembers present voting in favor of approving the Resolution.

2. "A RESOLUTION APPOINTING VICKI ANDERSON AS A MEMBER OF THE TOWN OF SIGNAL MOUNTAIN LIBRARY BOARD."

Councilmember Gardner made a motion to approve the Resolution. Vice Mayor Murdock seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote, with all Councilmembers present voting in favor of approving the Resolution.

3. "A RESOLUTION APPOINTING CHARLES POSS AND SUSANNAH MURDOCK AS A MEMBERS OF THE TOWN OF SIGNAL MOUNTAIN MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION."

Councilmember Anderson made a motion to approve the Resolution with a correction in the heading on line 2 removing an "A" so that the correction reads: "...MURDOCK AS MEMBERS OF THE TOWN OF SIGNAL...". Councilmember Gardner seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote, with all Councilmembers present voting in favor of approving the Resolution as amended.

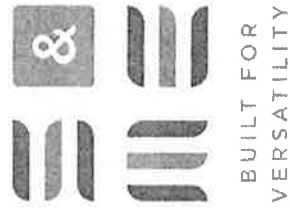
Discussion

- c. Fire and Police Salary Surveys. Town Manager, Boyd Veal, explained that the Chiefs have performed salary surveys of the local municipalities. However, he said he is awaiting the results of a professional state-wide survey being conducted by Burris, Thompson & Associates. In addition, Mr. Veal will present all the information gathered to the Personnel Committee. Council agreed to delay discussion on this item.
- a. Update on Old Town Sidewalk Project. This item was postponed to a future meeting.
- f. Town Website. Mr. Veal informed the Council that he has met with the Department Heads to survey their needs and that what they requested were things that are most needed to help citizens. Mr. Veal said he is in favor of allowing departments access to their section of the website so they can respond quickly to provide information and to respond to issues. In addition, he said most departments need to be able to have on-line payments.

Council discussed methods of obtaining citizen input to the process. Council also asked that the ability to do a site search be included.

- b. Stormwater – TDEC Reporting and Stream Conditions. Stormwater Manager, Cliff Fite, explained that the Town recently completed a sampling of the local streams (required by the Tennessee Department of Environmental Conservation (TDEC) every 5 years). This sampling showed improvement, but still lists 4 local streams as impaired. Mr. Fite explained that 3 streams have e-coli and the 4th is due to acid mine drainage. Mr. Fite explained that these issues are often the result of septic systems which are permitted and overseen by the Hamilton County Division of Groundwater Protection.

Mr. Fite informed the Council that the Town has recently completed several projects to improve and control stormwater runoff. He explained, however, that there are lots of stormwater projects that still need to be performed, but that there is very little funding available. He explained that the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) has completed a review of the current stormwater rates, and have determined that the current rate structure is not sufficient to fund needed projects.



Signal Mountain Sewage Treatment Plant & Collection System

Mike Patrick, PE & Scott
McDonald, PE

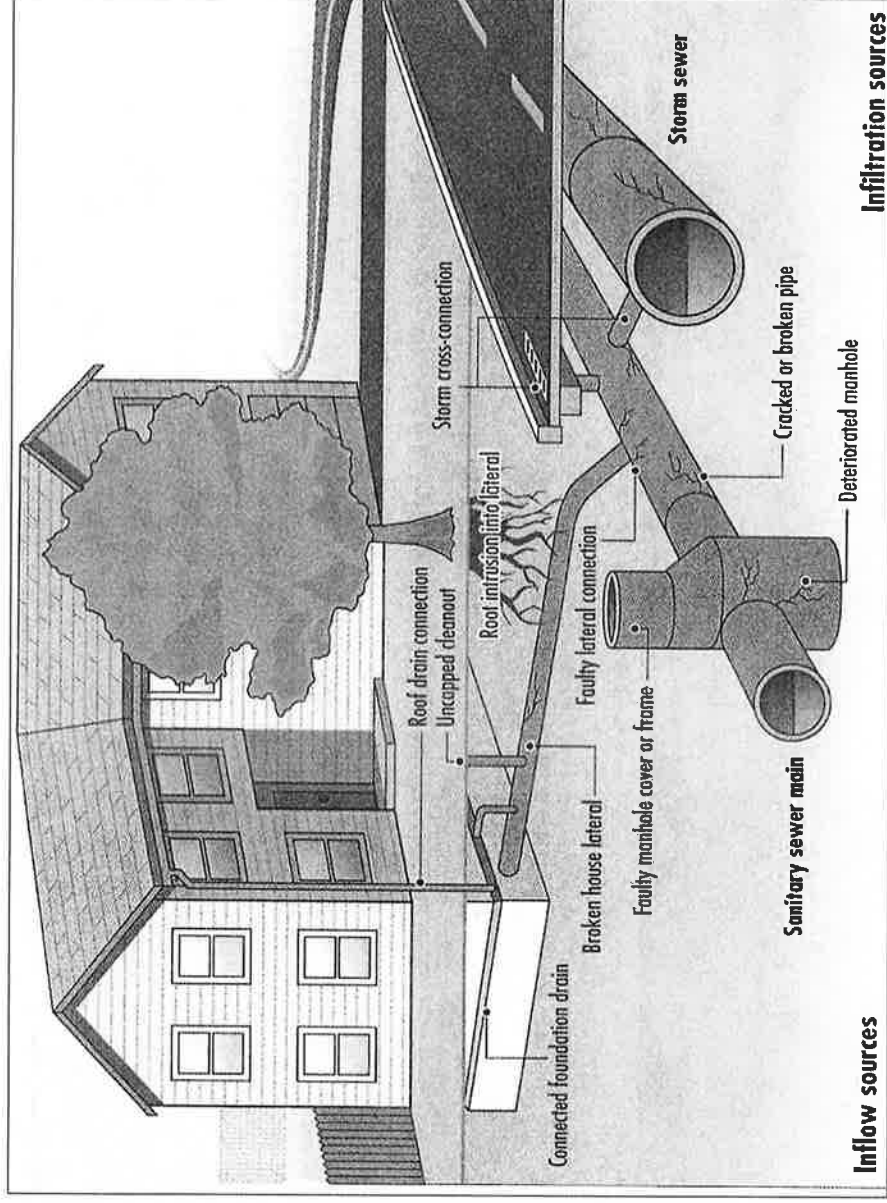


Signal Mountain Flows (for 2020)

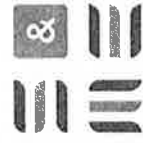
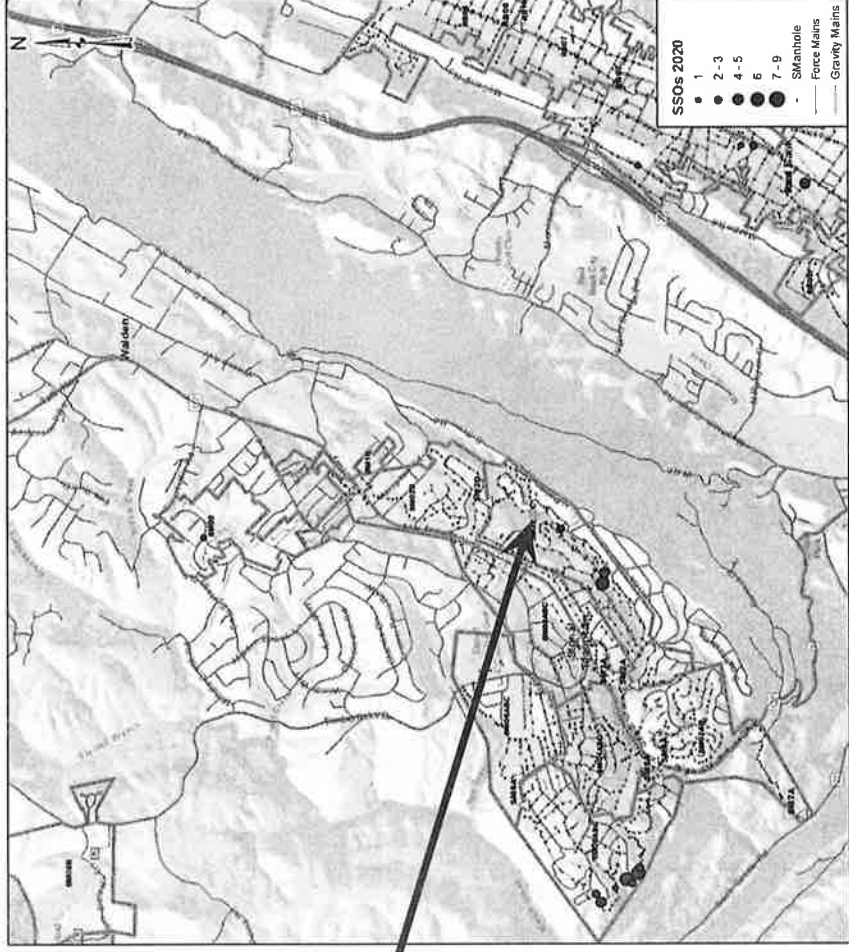
- ❖ Average Flows \approx 468,000 gallons per day with peaks of 757,000 gallons per day during dry weather.
- ❖ During wet weather peak flows \approx 5,000,000 gallons, almost ten-fold increase.
- ❖ Treatment plan is capable of handling \approx 1,300,000 gallons
- ❖ When these flows are exceeded, excess is routed around treatment process, but is disinfected before discharging to TN River.
- ❖ These flows are exceeded about 9.3% of the time during the year, usually during heavy rain events.



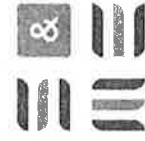
Where is all the extra flow coming from?



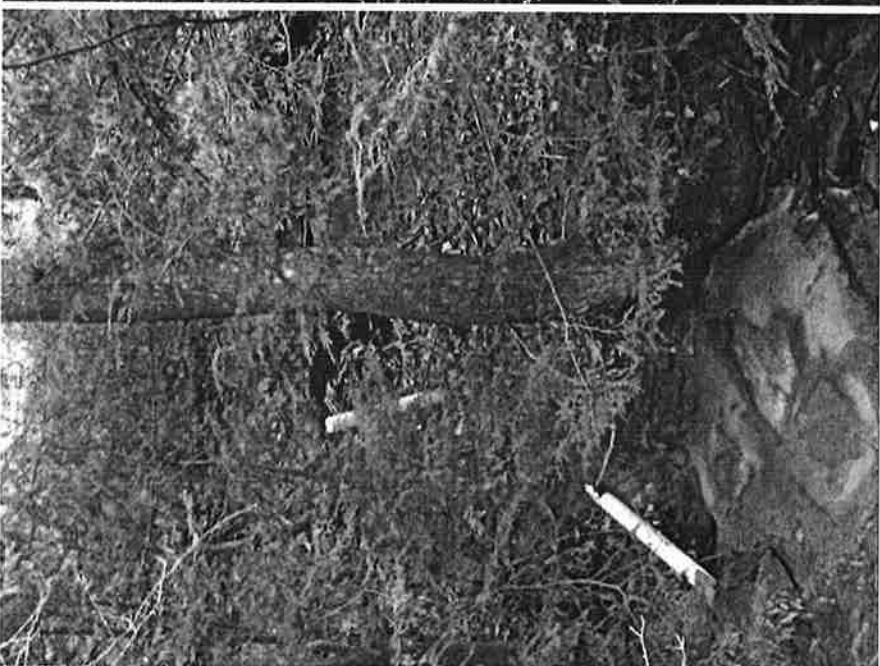
I/I & SSO Issues – Location of Sewers



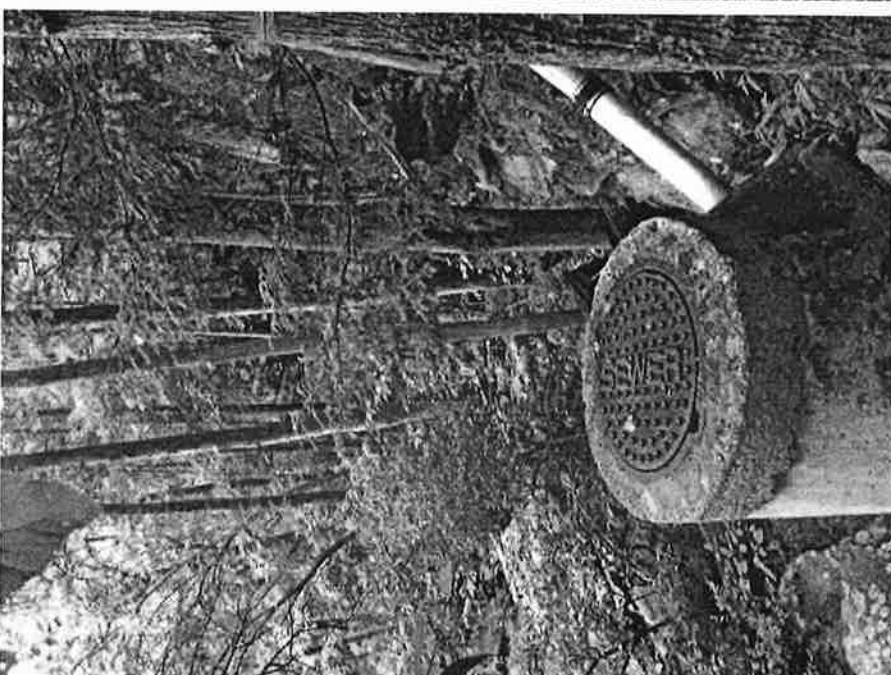
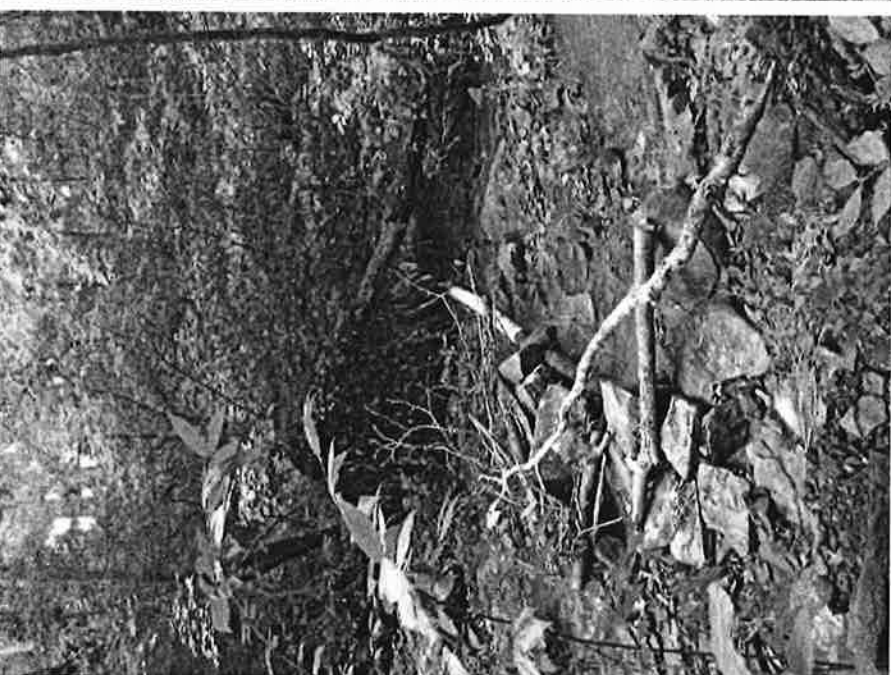
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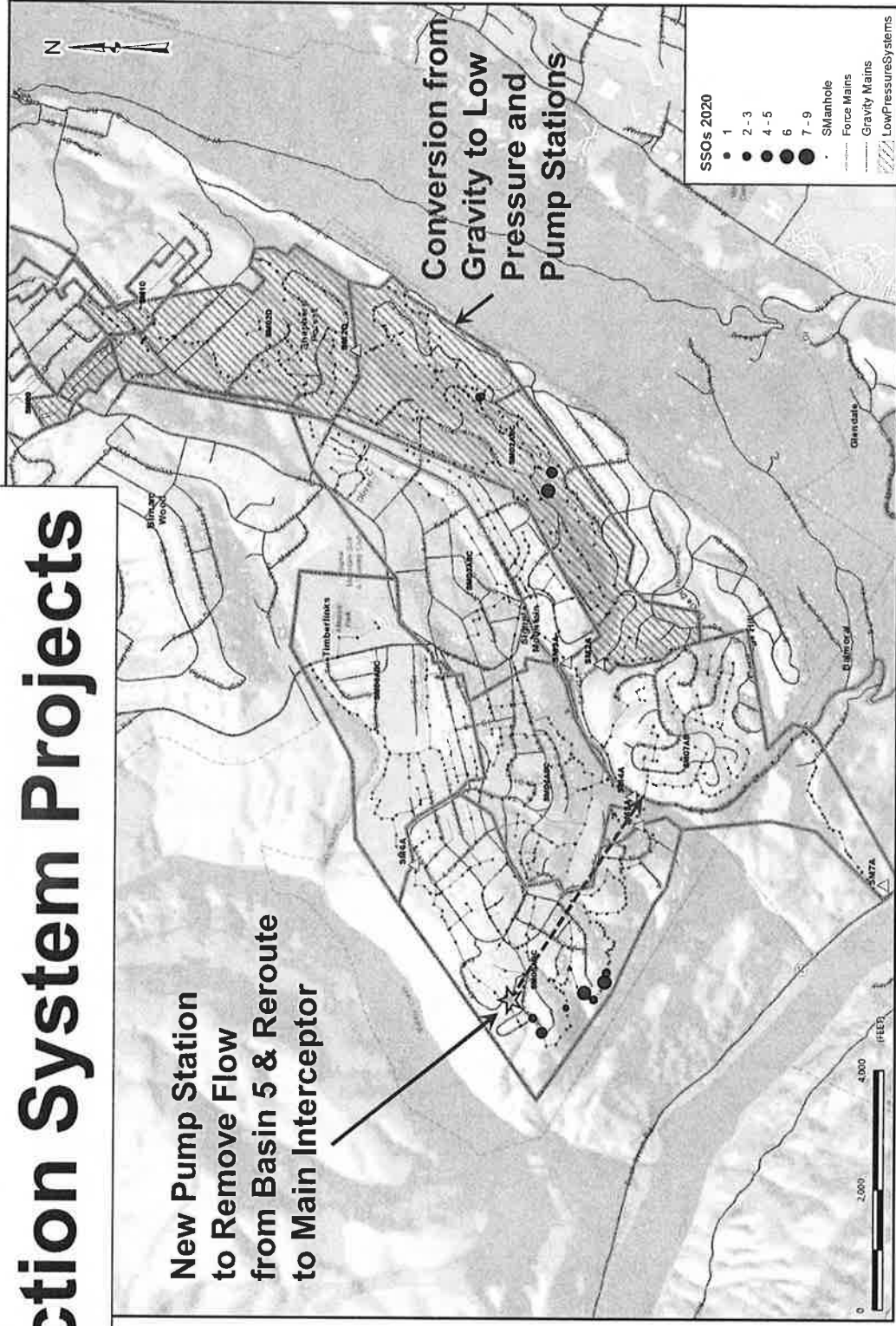




Collection System Projects

**New Pump Station
to Remove Flow
from Basin 5 & Reroute
to Main Interceptor**

**Conversion from
Gravity to Low
Pressure and
Pump Stations**



Solutions to solve the problems

- ❖ Began process of considering alternatives for the Plant:
 - Alt #1 - Upgrade the plant to handle the larger flows
 - Alt #2 - Close the plant and send flows to Chattanooga for treatment
 - Upgrading the plant appears to be more economical but requires review/permitting and approval by TDEC.
 - This is a 4-step process.
- ❖ While disposition of plant is considered, conduct investigations and select portions of the system to rehabilitate or replace.
 - A combination of repairs of existing system, replacement and new pump stations will likely be the most cost-effective solution.



Timeline

- ❖ WWTA has an engineering firm currently preparing the initial information required by TDEC (Preliminary Engineering Report).
- ❖ Initial meeting with TDEC is scheduled for January 2021 to discuss options and steps forward for upgrading the plant.
- ❖ Preliminary investigations of the collection system have been completed, options for repairing or replacing will begin in Spring of 2021 once State Revolving Funding is in place.
- ❖ Both approaches will take time and require significant funding.
- ❖ The needs in this service area must be balanced with needs in other service areas with regard to funding.



Questions?



- d. Board, Commissions, Committees Appointments. This item was postponed to the next meeting to allow Council members to have an opportunity to interview the applicants.
- e. Committee Liaison Guidelines. Two draft versions of guidelines were presented (see attached copies). Mayor Poss remarked that Elizabeth Baker had sent him an e-mail regarding this matter. The Council held extensive discussion, including the complexity of a Council member advising vs observing during discussions and decision-making processes during board or committee deliberations. Mayor Poss asked Council and the Town Attorney to review the drafts prior to the next meeting.

Manager's Report

Mr. Veal reported that the Library expansion is moving forward.

Mr. Veal reminded the Council that there will be a Water Board meeting next Monday at 6:00 p.m.

Other Business

- a. Communications from the Mayor/Council. Mayor Poss said he had spoken to Bill Lusk. Based on Mr. Lusk's recommendation, Mayor Poss is appointing himself to the Transportation Planning Organization. Mr. Veal reminded the Council that a resolution is needed and a proxy must be appointed.
- b. Reports from Committees or Boards. None
- c. Other. None

Tentative Agenda

Council discussed a tentative agenda for the December 28, 2020 meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.



Charles Poss, Mayor



Recorder